

**REMARKS**

Applicants express appreciation for the telephone interviews conducted on February 25-26, 2004 with Examiner Mirza and Applicants' attorneys, D'Ann Naylor Rifai and Eric Stephenson. Although no agreement was reached, the amendments presented in this submission are believed to be in harmony with the discussion during the interview.

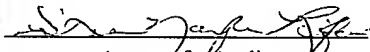
Claims 16-30 are pending. Claims 16-24 stand rejected. Independent claims 16, 21, 22, 23, and 24 have been amended. Claims 25-30 have been added. No new matter has been added.

Claims 16-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bowman-Amuah (U.S. Patent 6,477,580) and further in view of published patent application U.S. 2002/0095400 naming Johnson et al. as inventors. Neither Bowman-Amuah or Johnson et al. teaches "providing a state change service, wherein the state change service causes the agent machine to change a state of the agent machine to comply with a requirement for using one of the plurality of services," as required by amended independent claim 16 and as substantially required by amended independent claims 22, 23, and 24. As such, each of independent claims 16, 22, 23, and 24 are allowable, as are dependent claims 17-21.

CONCLUSION

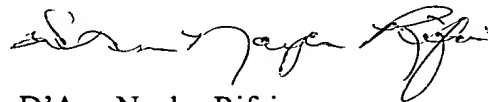
In view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein, the application is believed to be in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is solicited. Nonetheless, should any issues remain that might be subject to resolution through a telephonic interview, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at 512-439-5086.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop RCE, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on March 1, 2004.

  
Attorney for Applicants

3/1/04  
Date of Signature

Respectfully submitted,



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